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GERMAN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Description

Various social groups in Germany and their probable attitude at the end of the war. Numerical strength and position of ruling groups. Changes in the composition and strength of the old groups.

November 26, 1943

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I. RULING GROUPS

A. The Five Ruling Groups

Since the abolition of all popular representation, the political decisions in Germany have been reached by compromises between the leadership of the Nazi Party, the Army, the ministerial bureaucracy, and the representatives of certain powerful business groups. The economic groups have usually kept in the background, although their voice in the fundamental decisions of policy-making was just as strong as, and perhaps even stronger than, that of the government(state and Party). They must, therefore, be included among the ruling groups.

The ruling groups are defined by their participation in policy-making, foreign as well as internal. By the same token, they are responsible for the actions of the Nazi regime, and they are the chief beneficiaries of its policy; their status and power have definitely increased under Nazism. One may distinguish five such groups:

1. The Leadership of the Nazi Party and Affiliated Organizations.

   a. The Reich Leaders (Reichsleiter) of the Nazi Party
   b. The Gau Leaders (Gauleiter)and their staff
   c. The leadership of the German Labor Front
   d. The leadership of the Hitler Youth and other affiliated organizations.
   e. The leadership of the SS down to the Group Leaders
   f. The few Nazi big-wigs who do not hold any high Party position but rather government positions (such as Goering)

2. The Top Strata of the Governmental and Judicial Bureacracy.

   a. The Reich Ministers, the Undersecretaries of State, Ministerial Councillors, etc.
   b. The Reich Commissars, General Commissioners under the Four Years Plan, etc., the Trustees of Labor
   c. The Oberpraesidenten Regierungspraesidenten, etc.
   d. The Presidents, Judges, and Prosecutors of the Higher Courts, of the Peoples Courts, the Reichserbhofgericht, etc.

3. The High Command of the Wehrmacht and its Representatives in 2 (a,b) and 4.

1. The Leadership of the Nazi Party and Affiliated Organizations.

   a. The Reich Leaders (Reichsleiter) of the Nazi Party
   b. The Gau Leaders (Gauleiter)and their staff

4. The Leadership of Big Business.

a. Especially the owners, managers, and directors of the large industrial and financial concerns
b. The leadership of the "self-government" of industry: the Reich Groups, Reichsvereinigungen, Economic Chambers, etc.
c. The leading engineers, technicians, and experts, particularly in the Main Committees (Hauptausschuesse) and Industry Rings.

5. The Landed Aristocracy.

a. The owners of the great estates, especially in Northern and Eastern Germany
b. The new "peasant élite", perhaps best represented by the Bauernfuehrer in the Reich Food Estate.

B. Numerical Strength

Group 1:
a. About 40 (including the Party Chancellory and the Reichs-Organisationsleitung)
b. 43 Gau Leaders, each with a staff of approximately 30-40; 822 Kreis leaders
c. About 65 in the Central Office; 43 Gauobmaenner, 822 Kreisobmaenner
d. About 50 for each (Hitler Youth, Reich Labor Service, S.A., N.S. Motor Corps, N.S. Flying Corps); altogether about 250
e. About 125 Obertz-, Ober-, and Gruppenfuehrer about 125 Brigadefuehrer
(a-e). Total about 2,200 excluding the District (Kreis) level
Total about 3,850 including the District (Kreis) level

Group 2:
a. About 180
b. About 60 Reich Commissioners and Commissars
About 23 Trustees of Labor
About 42 Chiefs of Gau Labor Exchanges
c. 12 Oberpraesidenten, 52 Regierungspraesidenten and Police Directors, 799 Landraete, 105 Polizeipraesidenten 1
d. 32 Oberlandesgerichte and Generalstaatsansralte, about 200 Landgerichte
e. About 15 Lord Mayors of cities with 500,000 and more inhabitants.
(a-e). Total about 1,550

ed. Wilhelm Bauer and Peter Dehen.

1/ Tatsachen und Zahlen ueber Deutschland, 1941, p.13.

Group 3:[1]

15	Field Marshals	ARMY
19	Colonel Generals	
172	Generals	
470	Lieutenant Generals	
4	Field Marshals	AIR FORCE
8	Colonel Generals	
61	Generals	
78	Lieutenant Generals	
2	Grossadmirale	NAVY
3	Generaladmirale	
17	Admirals	
25	Vice Admirals	
43	Counter Admirals	
917		
1,375	Major Generals(Army)	
175	Major Generals (Air Force)	

Group 4 a,b: Fairly accurate estimates are impossible. In 1932 Theodor Geiger estimated the number of the leaders of the unpersoenliche Grossunternehmungen(large joint stock corporations)at 15,000.[2] Today, their number is probably much smaller, due to the process of concentration and rationalization under the Nazi system.

The following figures may give some indication of the numerical strength of this stratum:

Number of establishments employing more than 200 persons (1933)[3]

Number Employed Per Establishment	Industry	Trade Communication Transportation
201-1,000	3,983	1,748
1000- 5,000	498	118
500 and over	18	3

The center of this stratum must be sought in the last two categories. If it is assumed that the top management consists of 20 persons for each establishment, one arrives at a figure of 12,740.

After 1933, the number of enterprises employing more than 5,000 workers has greatly increased; at the same time, they have been concentrated in fewer hands. Today the actual ruling core of group 4 comprises probably not more than 1,000 persons.

1/ The generals of the Waffen S.S. are included among group 1(e)
2/ Die Soziale Schichtung des Deutschen Volkes,1932, p.82.
3/ The Fate of Small Business in Nazi Germany. Senate Committee Print No. 14, 78 Congress, 1. Session, 1943, p.135.

Group 5:

a. If one assumes as a qualification for membership in the landed aristocracy the ownership of agricultural estates of 500 hectars and over, one arrives at a figure of 6,726 (counting one owner for each estate). The actual ruling groups of the landed aristocracy, however, are the owners of much larger estates. The number of agricultural estates of 1,000 and more hectars was 2,807 in 1933. [1] No statistical breakdown of this figure is available.

Walter Darré, the first Nazi Minister of Agriculture, wrote in 1936 that 412 Junkers owned as much land as 1,000,000 peasants.

b. The center of the Nazi peasant "elite" is probably constituted by the Peasant Leaders. In 1942-3, there were 30 Regional Leaders and about 700 District Peasant Leaders.[2]

C. Basis of Superior Position

These five groups are closely interconnected economically as well as politically. To a great extent there is even an identity of personnel, particularly between the members of groups 1,4 and 5. A totalitarian society implies centralization of control and the abolition of the basic distinctions between society and the state. Consequently, (a) economic power tends to become political power, and (b) political power is increasingly strengthened by economic power.

1. Groups 1 and 4.

a. Economic power becomes political power:

i. German industrialists and financiers hold key positions in the government of the Reich.

ii. The Reich government has entrusted the peak business organizations with the performance of functions which in a totalitarian state involve far reaching political decisions (planning of production, allocation of raw materials and government orders, exploitation of the occupied countries).

iii. Leading business men are rewarded with high ranks in the SS, thus sharing the political privileges of this organization.

b. Political power is strengthened by economic power:

i. High-ranking members of the Nazi Party and its affiliated organizations function in the boards of the large industrial and financial enterprises.

ii. The Party and its affiliated organizations operate giant business enterprises of their own (for example, the enterprises of the German Labor Front and of the Wilhelm Gustoff Foundation). In some fields, Party-dominated enterprises hold a virtual monopoly (e.g., the Franz Eher publishing house).

1/ Statistisches Jahrbuch für des Deutsche Reich, 1937, p.79
2/ Neues Bauerntum, December 1942.

iii. The gigantic Hermann Goering Combine is in fact controlled by big-wigs of the Nazi Party.

In group 4 must be included the leading engineers and technicians in industry, whose power has been steadily increased under the Nazi regime. The Hauptausschuesse (Main Committees) and Industrieringe (Industrial Rings), which constitute the key organizations for the rationalization of the German war economy, are exclusively composed of engineers and technicians. A German statistical analysis shows that out of 143 members of the managing boards of 35 industrial corporations in the Ruhr District, 85 are technicians.[1] They exercise more than merely technological or economic power; owing to the totalitarian merger of economic and political power, they play an important part in the perpetuation of the Nazi system (formulation and application of Nazi methods for intensified exploitation of labor, etc.).

This "technocratic" stratum will certainly dissociate itself from the Nazi ideology after the breakdown of the Hitler regime and will offer collaboration with the United Nations. It should not be forgotten, however, that, by tradition, education, and training, these leading engineers are tied up with the expansionist interests of German heavy industry,[2] which has always been hostile to a democratic reorganization of German society.

2. Group 2 and 3. The Army (as also the Nazi Party and its armed organizations) is a most powerful political factor if only by virtue of its size and strength. Despite the totalitarian centralization of control, the gigantic terroristic administrative and military machines of the Nazi state operate under their own weight and impair the freedom of political action of the ruling groups. The independence of these terroristic, administrative, and military machines, however, has its definite limitations. The apparatus is tied to the existence of a strong national government which is capable of asserting Germanys independence, keeping the monopolistic economy going, and "coordinating" the labor force. Without such a government, the apparatus in its prevailing structure and composition would either have no function or could be reduced considerably. It is this identity of interests which binds the German Army and Civil Service to a nationalistic and anti-democratic government. The "neutrality" of the conservative Army circles and of the Civil Service is to a large degree deceptive.

Apart from these general considerations, the Army and the Civil Service have most concrete ties with the highest economic group (4). In the Armament Council, five generals sit together with eight industrialists. In addition, personnel connections are established by the inclusion of high Army officers and Civil Servants in the boards of the key economic enterprises.

1/ OSS Report, R and A No. 1194, pp. 7 and 11.
2/ Ibid. p.11.

3. Group 5. The power of the landed aristocracy has unquestionably decreased under the Nazi regime in favor of the industrial sector of the economy. Their members, however, hold many leading positions in the SS, and the Army High Command is still to a great extent composed of members of the old nobility. The Nazi regime has left untouched the vast Entail Estates in Eastern Germany; it has granted some of their owners the privileges of the Hereditary Estate Law, and the SS has rewarded them with giant new estates in the occupied Eastern territories. [1] Other landed aristocrats have strengthened and expanded their traditional connection with big business.

To summarize, the privileged position of the ruling groups in Nazi Germany still rests on the old foundations--economic and political power (the latter defined by control over the terroristic, military, and administrative machine). The general trend, however, is that political power is increasingly amalgamated with and even dependent on economic power. This trend is caused by the following facts:

a. The Nazi regime was set up in order to cope effectively with the internal conflicts which had assumed an ever more threatening form under the Weimar Republic (between big and small business, capital and labor, between the "new" and "old" industries). Also to conquer the "living space" necessary for the functioning and the expansion of the highly monopolized economy.

b. This was conditioned on the establishment of a war economy which was bound to rationalize the entire economy under the leadership of the most efficient and advanced industrial enterprises.

c. At the same time, the efficient control of labor, which was one of the most urgent goals of the Nazi regime, could best be accomplished through the mechanisms of economic control.

But the concentration of economic power was accompanied by a continual strengthening of the terroristic apparatus which was necessary for keeping the subjected population in line. By the sheer weight of this apparatus, its masters have acquired a position of power which overshadows that of the industrial and financial leadership. The latter, for the most part, has kept skillfully in the background and refrained from too conspicuous political exposure. This may make it easy for them to dissociate themselves from the Nazi regime after its final defeat.

D. Changes in the Composition of the Ruling Groups since the Weimar Republic

The fundamental change in the forms of political control which marked the transition from the Weimar Republic to the Nazi state was not accompanied by an equally fundamental change in the type of the ruling groups. To be sure, the Leadership of the Nazi Party and affiliated organizations is a newcomer, and the High Command of the Wehrmacht has greatly extended its influence.

1/ OSS., Political Intelligence Report, No. 21, Central Europe, pp. 6-7.

Moreover, within the Leadership of Big Business the process of concentration has eliminated from the ruling stratum a large number of formerly decisive industrial and financial interests and has unified the formerly conflicting tendencies within this group. The core of the leadership of big business and the Landed Aristocracy and, to a lesser extent, the "expert" personnel of the Governmental and Judicial Bureaucracy, has remained, however, almost unchanged. It is true that the leadership of big business contained quite a few industrialists and bankers who stood for a more liberal and democratic policy, but they were almost exclusively connected with the light industries which were rapidly losing out against heavy industry. Their political influence was steadily declining with the decline of their economic position. The only large German trust which, at the end of the Weimar Republic, could still be considered as antagonistic to the Nazi regime, the I. G. Farbenindustrie, came into the Nazi camp shortly after 1933.

One large group has definitely been excluded from the ranks of the ruling groups by the Nazi regime, namely, the labor bureaucracy. Through its representatives in the the trade unions and in the Parliaments, labor was a strong partner in the compromises which shaped the policy of the Weimar Republic. In the Nazi state, labor is no longer represented on the policy-making level. The German Labor Front is not a new form of the old trade unions, but rather an over-all organization of employers and employees, in which the latter have a voice only in questions of minor factory conditions and of efficiency improvement. The leadership of the German Labor Front does not represent labor, but the governmental and Party bureaucracy.

The disappearance of labor from the policy-making level illustrates the extent to which the ruling groups have tightened their control in the Nazi state. One may say that, under the Weimar Republic, the political decisions were the result of a compromise between the ruling and the ruled, whereas, under the Nazi regime, they result from a compromise among the ruling groups. This change has also brought about the decline in the political weight of another social group which had played an important part in the Republic and whose function was perhaps best represented by the role of the Center Party. This party (Catholic, but not requiring a profession of that faith from its members) included representatives from all social strata, but it drew its chief strength from the Catholic workers and trade unions (especially in Western and Southern Germany), the clergy and the free professions. Owing to the fact that the Center Party frequently held the balance between the ruling and the ruled groups in the parliamentary system, the Center Party had managed to hold a key position which lost its foundation under the Nazi regime.

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E. Cliques and Class Consciousness

Within the five ruling groups, there are numerous cliques, constituted by a community of specific interests which range all the way from the "rackets" of competing gangs to differences in industrial policies. We must limit ourselves to a few examples:

1. Cliques within the Party: They are based chiefly on different business affiliations and/or different tactics of securing and strengthening the present power position as much as possible. The following may be mentioned:

a. the Goering clique (strongly affiliated with heavy industry)
b. the SS clique (which has recently fortified its ties with the landed aristocracy, without neglecting big business and finance, particularly in the exploitation of the Eastern territories)
c. the "radical" clique (inclined to revive the National Bolshevist tendencies in the Party, mainly in the old SA)

In addition, there are many cliques grouped around personal jealousies and hatreds.

2. Cliques within the Army Command:

a. the "conservative" ("Old Prussian") clique against the Nazi officers
b. the school of "Eastern orientation" against that of "Western orientation"

3. Cliques within big business:

a. competition and collusion among the large concerns, although regimented by the war economy, still produce the traditional antagonisms
b. the old established enterprises against the Nazi undertakings (Hermann Goering Combine; Bank of German Labor, etc.)
c. finance against industrial capital, especially the problem of the financing of armament orders; Nazi industrialists have increased their control over the banks.

All these cliques readily unite as soon as their basic interest is threatened, namely, their grip on the economic and political apparatus of Germany. The Nazi regime has tremendously strengthened the class consciousness of Germany's ruling groups; the establishment of this regime was in itself the expression of a united and strengthened class consciousness. These groups agreed on the setting up of a totalitarian regime and submitted to stern regimentation of their affairs because they saw no other way of disciplining labor and carrying through a streamlined imperialistic policy. At the same time, they submitted to a series of pseudo-democratic measures, destined to create the illusion of a Volksgemeinschaft (racial community). Many conspicuous privileges have been abolished in order to retain the basic and essential privileges of economic and political power.

[redacted]

Even before the war, many privileges of comfort and luxury had been denied to the rich, while certain elegant places (hotels, sanatoria) were thrown open to loyal Nazi workers. The war has of course accentuated this trend. The ruling groups must keep their privileges out of the public eye. It is reported that well-dressed people are frequently sneered at on the streets and subways in German cities, and that widespread resentment exists against rich shirkers.

II. RULED GROUPS

A. Numerical Strength of Social Groups

1. Social stratification according to Geiger:[1]

Gainfully Employed

a.	Capitalists	200,530
b.	Medium and small entrepreneurs	6,574,429
c.	Day Laborers	4,934,314
d.	Wage and salary earners, qualified (skilled)	5,750,710
e.	Wage earners, unqualified (unskilled)	18,294,638
		35,853,730

middle class

Middle Class (b and d)		12,325,148
Proletariat (c and e)		23,228,582
		35,554,100

2. Census (in thousands)

		1925[2]	1939 (old territory)[3]
a.	Owners, etc. (Selbstaendige)[4]	5,539	4,784
b.	Civil Servants	1,724	1,818
c.	Salary earners	3,550	4,664
d.	Workers (Wage earners)	14,434	17,375
e.	Family helpers	5,437	5,628
f.	Domestic employees	1,325	
		32,009	34,269

On the basis of Geiger's classification, more than 90% of the gainfully employed persons in Germany would belong to the ruled groups, without any political representation, without any participation in the policy-making decisions--mere objects of totalitarian regimentation. This vast mass, however, comprises the beneficiaries and practitioners as well as the victims of the Nazi terror: the rank and file of the SS and SA, the hundreds of thousands of Nazi officials in the Party and its affiliated organizations, the profiteers of "tyranization", Germanization, and Nazification among the middle classes, and the reactionary forces in the Civil Service.

1/ Loc. Cit., p. 23 (according to the census of 1925).
2/ Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1931, p. 17
3/ Sonderbeilag zu Wirtschaft und Statistik, 1941, No. 19, p. 2.
4/ Includes Heimarbeiter, civil servants, and salary earners in leading positions.

B. General Trend

The following fundamental changes in the composition of the ruled groups have occurred under the Nazi system: the process of rationalization, necessitated by the war economy, has completely undermined the position of the old middle classes (small and medium business, artisans). Even if their numerical strength has not considerably decreased, their economic and political status has become one of total dependency. Economically they are now dependent on the organizations of big business, which have made them their outlets, subsidiaries, or agents. The retail trade has been decimated by the closing down of shops in the process of total mobilization (for figures see below under D). Between 300,000 and 500,000 have been mobilized as industrial workers. Politically, they are not represented on the policy-making level; the leadership of the Economy Group Retail Trade, for example, is dominated by the large commercial interests.

While their economic basis is thus gradually disappearing, the old middle classes have not ceased to form a clearly defined social group. They have kept their own mentality and reactions which are equally remote from those of the new middle classes and the working classes. They still regard their shop and their trade as part and parcel of their personality, and the proletariat as their worst enemy. Among all the strata of the German population (with the possible exception of the farmers) they have been the least changed by the totalitarian forms of life under the Nazi state. Privacy under law and order still comprises their supreme value. They are anti-Nazi in so far as the Nazis have ruined their business, dissolved family life, and alienated the young generation by the activities of the Hitler Youth, the SA, etc. They are violently anti-bolshevist and thoroughly nationalistic.

C. Labor

The process of division within the working population, already in progress under the Weimar Republic, has become a fundamental element of Nazi labor policy. As a result, the working population now appears to be split into at least four social groups:

a. a numerically and politically strong labor aristocracy, consisting of the various officials and Vertrauensmaenner of the Labor Front in the plants, the "sub-leaders," foremen, etc.

b. the members of the highest paid groups in the efficienty wage system, from whose ranks group a is partly recruited.

c. the bulk of skilled and semi-skilled German workers,

d. the unskilled and lowest-paid groups, including the majority of female labor.

These groupings apparently follow the line of strictly technological distinctions (higher skill, higher efficiency, higher wages), but they have very definite political implications. Under the Nazi regime, whose labor policy is in its entirely directed to mass domination and manipulation, performance above average efficiency means spontaneous participation in this policy; in other words, political and ideological reliability.

The higher wage is not only the reward for the more efficient performance but also for collaboration with the ruling groups. For this reason, group a and a large part of group b must be considered as a Nazified stratum.

It will be relatively easy to identify groups a and b, which constitute the Nazi-infiltrated stratum of labor. The Nazis themselves have distinguished the members of this stratum, and the workers in the respective factories will well remember them. They appeared as the officials of the Labor Front, and, more important, as the "shock troops" (Aktivisten) of the plants, the holders of Work Efficiency Books, the participants in the Works Proposal Scheme, who advanced valuable suggestions for the streamlining of Nazi production and control.

Another significant change in the structure of the German labor force is the shift in the age and sex factors. The bulk of the working population now consists of age groups over 45, and the proportion of female labor has greatly increased.

Not less significant is the change in the living conditions of the German workers. While it may be assumed that, up to the very last, the workers will be far better fed than the "normal consumer", their housing has seriously deteriorated in consequence of the air raids and the migration of industry. At the end of the war, a large part of Germany's working population will be housed in camps and barracks, close to the plants, and separated from their families.

To what extent have these changes affected Germany's working class as a social group?

During the first years of the Nazi regime, the creation of full employment constituted a powerful bond between the regime and the vast majority of the working population. The political opposition was either annihilated or driven underground. A specially privileged stratum of politically reliable workers (supervisors, foremen, sub-leaders, officials of the Labor Front) was established in every plant; the rest were kept in line by the omnipresent Nazi organization which isolated the workers in the individual plants and even in the different shops in the plant, and brought them together only in closely supervised mass undertakings ("Strength through Joy").

The political consciousness characteristic of the German workers was thus destroyed, and the majority of the working class became dependable and obedient attendants of the Nazi machine.

This attitude persisted and was even stimulated during the first years of the war as long as the victories of the German armies seemed to prove the efficiency and strength of the Nazi system. However, the situation changed under the impact of the increasing strain of work (efficiency wage system), and the general deterioration of German war potential.

The steady increase in female labor and in the higher age-groups (which had received their political training prior to and under the Weimar Republic) fostered apathy and dissatisfaction. However, the terroristic apparatus of the Nazi machine and the disillusionment of the oppressed population prevented the rise of a political opposition -- this was confined to the small underground groups and to acts of isolated sabotage.

At the end of the war, German labor will probably be united only in these ways: the desire to obtain peace for a fairly modest security of work and living: the preservation of Germany's national independence, which they have always regarded as a prerequisite for social progress and democratic reconstruction. The former political tendencies which have split the German workers will probably be resurrected in a new form as soon as civil liberties are restored, but notwithstanding these political differences, German labor is the strongest and largest democratic force in Germany. The only serious obstacle to full-fledged collaboration will be the suspicion of a dismemberment of the Reich, of its enslavement, and its reduction to semi-colonial status.

D. Artisans and Trade

The Nazi regime has made great efforts to preserve the artisans as a social group, partly for ideological reasons, partly (and more important) in the interest of mass domination. The Nazis wanted to maintain and to strengthen in this group a class consciousness different from that of the wage proletariat, toward which the economic position of the artisans tended to develop. The treatment of the artisans as an independent social group (for example, the revival of certain features of the old guild system) thus served to split further the ruled masses.

The German artisan has always been characterized by a strong pride in the work of his hands, in the individuality of his shop, in the personal relationship between him and the customer for whom he worked. These traits made him hostile to capitalistic industrialization; many artisans were loyal members of the Social Democratic Party. There, however, they formed a rather conservative stratum. Their tradition and the patriarchal order in their shop rendered them antagonistic to revolutionary changes and to internationalism. The German artisan has a definite aversion to anything that is "foreign"; in this sense, he is nationalistic. But he knows that he will not profit from a policy of imperialistic expansion (which is bound to increase the power of big industry); a positive policy may not find it difficult to win him over for democratic reconstruction.

The number of artisan enterprises in the German economy is still very great, notwithstanding the combing-out process. In 1933, the number of industrial and commercial enterprises employing only 1-5 persons was, 3,254,906 (amounting to 91.9% of all industrial and commercial establishments). 1

1/ Small Business Report, loc. cit., p. 135.

Since 1933, special regulations were applied for the classification of an enterprise as an "artisan establishment". In 1939, there were 1,567,472 artisan enterprises in greater Germany (including Austria and Sudetenland) employing 5,197,922 persons, representing 31.5% of all persons employed in industrial establishments.1

For trade, statistical figures are available only for the time prior to the great closing-down process. In 1939, 3,073,094 persons were employed in commercial establishments in greater Germany (2,750,063 in the old territory). About two thirds of these were employed in retail trade. Only the figures for 1933 are available: 852,728 retail establishments employed 1,937,441 persons.[2] Of the total number of establishments, only 0.2% were department stores, and only 0.4% were five and ten-cent stores.

The requirements of the war economy necessitated an ever increasing curtailment of consumer's goods and a rapid rationalization of establishments. By August 1, 1941, 6.4% of all retail shops had already been closed down. The Total Mobilization Decree of January 1943 will have affected about one-third of all remaining shops.[3] Moreover, [redacted]erous small shops throughout Germany have been merged into so-called "sales cooperatives" (Kriegsverkaufsgemeinschaften).

The same process has also victimized the small industrial enterprises. The urgent need for saving manpower and material and for increasing output accelerated a standardization and rationalization of work which concentrated production in the technically best-equipped large enterprises. One small plant after the other thus was absorbed by the great industrial concerns and combines.

The end of the war will thus find these strata of the old middle classe uprooted and dissolved -- part as industrial workers or home laborers, part as employees of the large industrial and commercial enterprises, part as impoverished shop-keepers and artisans. They have certainly been disappointed and disillusioned by the Nazi regime, but -- apart from the Social Democrats among them -- they have no native democratic and liberal philosophy. They (together with the lower ranks of the Civil Service) provided the Nazi movement with its most loyal followers, and their declining social status (between the rising bureaucracy of big business and the organized masses of the wage earners) makes their ranks a breeding ground for violent resentments. Anti-Semitism is widespread among them, as is nationalism and distrust of "foreigners."

1/ Ibid. p. 140-141
2/ Statistiches Jahrbuch für des Deutsche Reich, 1937, p. 140
3/ Small Business Report, op. cit., p. 115 f.

[redacted]

[redacted]

E. Civil Servants

Numerical Strength:[1]

1933 (including the Saar)	1,481,000	2.3% of total population
1939 (old territory)	1,818,000	2.6% "
1939 (including Austria and Sudetenlend)	2,000,000	2.6% "

The top stratum of the Civil Service (the higher ministerial and judicial bureaucracy) belongs to the ruling groups in Germany. Here, we are concerned with that vast majority of Civil Servants who perform non-political, technical-administrative functions. They comprise the minor employees of the governmental bureaucracy and of the provincial and municipal administration, postal and railroad employees, etc. In 1939, their numerical distribution was as follows:[2]

a. Reich Postal Service	224,916
b. Reich Railways	275,874
c. Federal, provincial, municipal administration; administration of justice	425,928
d. Schools, etc.	259,235
	1,185,953

With the exception of a relatively small number of Civil Servants included in c, these strata are usually regarded as performing non-political functions. For the German Civil Services however, the distinction between political and non-political functions is a very indefinite one. The German Civil Service has always been not only an administrative but also an authoritarian bureaucracy: by tradition, training, and attitude, the Civil Servant was the bearer of an authority which placed him above the rank and file of the population. His "Amt," the function which he performed, seemed to him something unquestionable, ordained from above, a part of an almost mystical "law and order". With the higher strata of the Civil Service, this attitude was the expression of a definite caste consciousness. With the lower strata, particularly in group (a) and (b), the authoritarian attitude had almost completely disappeared by the time of the Weimar Republic; many of their members were old Social Democrats.

1/ Small Business Report, p. 126
2/ Statistisches Jahrbuch 1937, p.25

[redacted]

The Weimar Republic did not succeed, however, in democratizing the bulk of the groups (c) and (d). The ministerial bureaucracy maintained its apparently neutral attitude towards the political form of government, but this neutrality was conditioned upon the incapacity or unwillingness of the government to reorganize the authoritarian bureaucracy in a genuinely democratic way. It may be expected that the ministerial bureaucracy will show the same neutrality after the downfall of the Nazi government: they will style themselves as strictly administrative experts who are ready to collaborate with any regime that promises to maintain "law and order."

The same holds true for a great part of the Civil Servants in group (d). Chauvinism, authoritarianism, and hostility to democratic forms is widespread among both, the academic and the non-academic strata. The elementary-school teachers furnished a relatively large percentage of the membership of the Nazi Party, and many university teachers made themselves the spokesmen of Nazi philosophy. It is noteworthy that resistance against the latter came from the old conservative rather then from the liberal or neutral university circles. They objected to the barbarian and terroristic features of National Socialism in the name of German "culture," but, by the same token, they will be most hostile to any foreign interference with German life, and their anti-democratic philosophy has certainly been strengthened by the failure of the Weimar Republic.

The German Civil Service was a highly organized group. The Deutscher Beamtenbund, a politically "neutrel" organization, comprised 1,019,902 members at the end of 1930; the Socialdemocratic Algemeiner Deutscher Beamtenbund, only 175,050.

F. Salary Earners

Numerical Strength:[1]

1933	4,032,345
1939 (old territory)	4,663,773
1939 (including Austria and Sudetenlend)	5,269,662

Distribution

	1933	1939 (old)	1939 (new)
Industry	1,300,818	1,651,566	1,846,255
Trade, Communication, Transportation, etc.	1,784,161	1,750,782	1,974,678
Public and Professional Service	831,048	1,167,442	1,338,577
Forestry, Agriculture	97,878	75,267	89,550
Domestic Service	18,440	18,716	20,602

1/ Small Business Report, pp. 132-3

The numerical strength of this stratum, which forms the core of the so-called new middle class, has increased during the last twenty years, as has its social prestige and consciousness. From the old middle classes, the salary earners are distinguished by a greater degree of security and dependency, from the wage earners by a definite anti-proletarian class consciousness and by a widespread identification with the interest and attitude of their employer.

The salaried employees are not, however, a politically unified group. Of the organized salary earners, 26.8% belonged to the Socialist unions, 34.1% to the Christian-National unions, and 22.6% to the Democratic Unions (figures for 1931). The Socialdemocratic Allgemeiner Freier Angestelltenbund (Afa) had 486,000 members (1931), the (predominantly nationalistic) Gesamtverband Deutscher Angestellten Geverkschaften 593,000 (1933), the Geverkschaftsbund der Angestallten (predominantly democratic) 335,428 (1931).[1] The nationalistic union was thus the strongest among the employee unions; its main organization, the Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfen Verband, officially anti-Semitic, was the most active pressure group; it had its own representatives in the Reichstag, and it became the stronghold of Nazism among the salary earners.

G. Free Professions

Numerical Strength	1933[1]	1939[2] (old Reich territory excl. Saar)
a. Churches, religious institutions	165.072	180.565
b. Artists, writers, editors	23.368	22.177
c. Lawyers, economic councillors, etc.	191.035	112.382
d. Physicians, dentists, nurses, etc.	401.418	401.939
e. Theater, film, radio, etc.	163.134	134.467

Groups b and e have been thoroughly Nazified, but the active Nazis among them can be easily identified since they have been conspicuously honored by the regime and since their activity has become well known throughout Germany. The other groups may be considered as politically neutral; their status has considerably declined under the Nazi system, and the majority will go along with the democratic forces.

The clergy will be treated in a separate chapter.

1/ Statistisches Jahrbuch 1937, p. 25
2/ Sonderbeilage zu Wirtschaft und Statistik, 1941, No. 19, p. 10

H. Peasants

Numerical Strength[1]

	1925	1939 (old territory)
Gainfully employed in agriculture and forestry	9,763	8,934
Dependents		3,331
TOTAL	14,434	12,265
Owners, managers, etc.		1,985,142
Unpaid family workers		4,772,278
Wage earners		2,111,029

1933

Size in hectares	Number of Enterprises in Ownership of Land[2]
0.51-1	307,154
1-2	429,258
2-5	743,271
5-10	597,972
10-20	436,071
20-50	256,892
50-100	51,424
100-200	14,971
200-500	9,309

The greatest number of small agricultural enterprises (under 20 hectares) is found in Bavaria, the Rhineland, Wuerttemberg, Brandenburg, Westphalia, Baden, and Hannover.[3]

The most important change that took place during the last decade is the decline in the farm population. The latter constituted 22.8% of the total population in 1925, but only 17.7% in 1939. Since then, the decline has continued: a German estimate of August 1943 gives a figure of 16%.[4] This tendency expresses the critical condition of German agriculture. At least since 1925, agricultural prices were below the world market, and agricultural labor was greatly undervaluated. The subsidies were to a large extent turned into benefits for the bigger estates, many small peasants were dispossessed, and a process of agricultural concentration was taking place. The Nazis did not succeed in stopping t is process.

1/ Small Business Report, pp. 132-3

2/ Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1937, p. 78

3/ Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1937, p.77

Bavaria:	286.165	enterprises under 20 ha (1933).
Rhine Province	87.651	" "
Württemberg	72.960	
Brandenburg	51.086	
Westphalia	47.511	
Baden	43.110	
Hannover	37.757	

4/ N.S. Landpost, August 13, 1943